

The Sword of the Spirit

Ephesians 6: 17

2/2/03

Intro

- Pray for the families of those lost in the shuttle accident.

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This is our last look at the book of Ephesians in our walk through the Bible. And this is the last section where Paul gives his final words of encouragement about spiritual warfare.

There have been two phrases which capture Paul's intent for our victory; "stand firm against the schemes of the enemy," and "resist in the evil day."

We can have victory and God expects us to have victory because He has given us what we need to stand firm – the armor of God.

We've looked at the first five of the six pieces of armor, and today we come to the **Sword of the Spirit**.

Our message today is about insights into the Sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

I. Why do we need a sword?

A. For both defense as well as offense.

- In defense it can counter the direct blows of the enemy.
- It is the only piece of armor that can attack, and should be therefore be the only weapon we own.
- This is not meant to be used on a brother.

Illus – “As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.” Proverbs 27:17

B. For close in fighting.

- This is the same word used whenever there is a reference to the Word of God.
- It is a small sword, or a long dagger.
- It would be strapped to the body to be always at the ready.
- This is the weapon of choice for when the fighting gets heated.
- It's the most effective for close-in fighting.
- This is a grin reminder that the battle is personal.

C. It is the sword of the Holy Spirit.

- Which is the Word of God;
- Logos vs. Rhema Word of God;
Logos is the entire written Word of God;
Rhema is the specific Word for your situation as applied by the Holy Spirit.
- What would God say in this situation?
- Specific lies require specific truths.
- The enemy uses the Word of God, also, but he abuses scripture by twisting it from its God intended meaning.

Illus- in logic, it's making a new emphasis and thus creating a new meaning. “I didn't say I kicked the dog.”
When someone takes a scripture out of context, he tries to create a different meaning than God intended.

Illus – I once met a person that would quote scripture just to get you to trust him – he was a con artist. We should be careful when someone quotes scripture inappropriately. “Isn't that car salesman nice, Honey? He quoted scripture.”

II. Why is the Sword of the Spirit a powerful weapon?

Hebrews 4:12, “For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”

- A. It’s living, active, and sharper than any two-edged sword.
- Because the Word of God is a person – Jesus Christ.
 - Living – not dead.
 - Active (energes) – effective, powerful, accomplishes much (will not return void).

Isaiah 55:11 “So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding *in the matter* for which I sent it.”

- Sharper than a two-edged sword – instead of hacking, the sword cuts and enters.
- B. It pierces to the very soul.
- Some people will say, “It cut me to the quick.”
 - Sometimes people have said, “That hurt pastor, but thank you, I needed it.”
 - It cuts to the heart.
- C. It discerns the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

- There is no fooling God.

Galatians 6:7 “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked, that which a man sows, he shall also receive.”

III. What do we “take up” the Sword of the Spirit?

A. Read it.

- Repeatedly Jesus would challenge people with the words, “Have you not read...?”

B. “Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly.”

- Colossians 3:16
- Let the Word of God transform you by the “renewing of your mind.”
- Believe it, trust it, put your confidence in it.

C. Use it.

- Strap it to your body and put it into everyday use.

Illus – There is an orphanage outside of Kibera...

Conclusion

Finally, having put on the armor of God, do one more thing; pray at all times in the Spirit. Be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for others.